

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 12608

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGSSC PINT, IT
SUBJ:ANDREOTTI CONVENES UNEXPECTED MEETING OF PARTY SECRE-
TARIES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM ACCORD

SUMMARY: IN A SURPRISE MOVE THAT SEEMED DESIGNED TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S RECENT PERSONAL SUCCESS
IN WASHINGTON, ANDREOTTI CONVENED A "CONSULTATIVE" MEETING
ON AUGUST 2 WITH THE SECRETARIES OF THE SIX PARTIES WHICH
SUPPORT HIS GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO REPORT ON HIS US VISIT
AND DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM ACCORD. ANDREOTTI'S
INITIATIVE WAS JUDGED "VALID AND CORRECT" BY THE PCI'S
BERLINGUER, BUT DC AND PSI LEADERS BOTH EXPRESSED RESERVA-
TIONS AGAINST CONTINUING THE MEETINGS ON A PERIODIC BASIS AS
EVEIDENTLY DESIRED BY THE PRIME MINISTER. THE DC UNDER MORO'S
GUIDANCE HAS CONSISTENTLY ATTEMPTED TO AVOID INSTITUTIONALIZED
GOVERNMENT-PARTY CONSULTATONS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S
PROGRAM, CONCERNED THAT THESE WOULD ADVANCE THE PCI'S
BID FOR ACCEPTANCE IN THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY. ON
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AN INTERNAL POLITICAL LEVEL, THE MOVE ALSO APPEARS
INTENDED TO REASSERT ANDREOTTI'S LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE
REALM OF DC-PCI RELATIONS, AN AREA WHICH MORO (AS
PARTY LEADER) HAS TRIED TO MAINTAIN AS HIS OWN PRESERVE.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN AN INITIATIVE THAT SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN THE

POLITICAL PARTIES BY SURPRISE, PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI CONVENED A "CONSULTATIVE" MEETING ON AUGUST 2 OF THE SECRETARIES OF THE SIX PARTIES WHICH SUPPORT HIS GOVERNMENT. THE DC AND THE REPUBLICANS WERE REPRESENTED AT THE DEPUTY SECRETARY LEVEL (GALLONI AND TERRANA, RESPECTIVELY) BECAUSE OF ZACCAGNINI'S INCAPACITATION AND BIASINI'S APPARENT ABSENCE FROM ROME. THE MEETING, ANNOUNCED ONLY A HALF HOUR BEFORE IT BEGAN, WAS CHARACTERIZED BY AN ANDREOTTI SPOKESMAN AS THE FIRST OF PERIODIC, MONTHLY CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LEADERS OF THE SIX SIGNATORY PARTIES TO THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED PROGRAM ACCORD. ITS PURPOSE WAS TWOFOLD. FIRSTLY, SINCE PARLIAMENT WAS IN RECESS, IT PROVIDED ANDREOTTI AN OPPORTUNITY TO REPORT TO THE PARTIES ON THE RESULTS OF HIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES. SECONDLY, IT SERVED AS AN INITIAL CONSULTATION ON THE TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM ACCORD. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETS TODAY (AUG. 3) TO DISCUSS CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE ACCORD (IN THE AREA OF PUBLIC ORDER AND PRISON REFORM) THAT MIGHT BE INTRODUCED THROUGH GOVERNMENT DECREE AS WELL AS WORK ON LEGISLATION THAT WILL BE INTRODUCED WHEN PARLIAMENT RECONVENES IN SEPTEMBER.

2. ALTHOUGH THE PROBLEM OF DEVISING A FORMULA FOR POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS (THE LEFT PARTIES SPOKE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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"GUARANTEES") ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN FREQUENTLY RAISED DURING THE PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE INTERPARTY PROGRAM ACCORD, THE ISSUE WAS EVIDENTLY NOT RESOLVED, AND INDEED IT WAS NOT MENTIONED WHEN THE ACCORD WAS PRESENTED TO THE CHAMBER IN A JOINT MOTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP HEADS OF THE SIX PARTIES. ANDREOTTI HAD EARLIER SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF PERIODIC MEETINGS BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PARTY SECRETARIES TO COORDINATE THE GOVERNMENT'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCORD. HOWEVER, THE DC WAS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC SINCE IT WISHED TO AVOID AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THE GOVERNMENT'S DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM NEGOTIATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES -- AN ACTIVITY THAT COULD FURTHER PCI CLAIMS TO ACCEPTANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY. THE DC APPEARED TO FAVOR A PROPOSAL (AIRED BY PICCOLI) FOR PERIODIC CONSULTATIONS IN PARLIAMENT BETWEEN THE PARLIAMENTARY GROUP HEADS OF THE SIX PARTIES.

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3. GIVEN THIS BACKGROUND AND THE CONTINUING DEBATE OVER POLITICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE ACCORD, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT INITIAL REACTIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN ANDREOTTI'S MEETING VARIED CONSIDERABLY. THE MOST POSITIVE ASSESSMENT WAS PROVIDED BY PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER WHO LABELED ANDREOTTI'S INITIATIVE "VALID AND CORRECT". BERLINGUER ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE RESULTS OF ANDREOTTI'S US TRIP WERE "ON THE WHOLE" POSITIVE, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THE TRIP DEMONSTRATED THAT "IN THE US, AS MORE OR LESS EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, THE REALITIES OF THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION ARE BEING TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT."

4. COMMENTING FOR THE DC, DEPUTY SECRETARY GALLONI'S APPRAISAL WAS A GOOD DEAL MORE QUALIFIED AND CIRCUMSPECT. WHILE AFFIRMING THE DC'S COMPLETE SUPPORT FOR THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT, GALLONI SAID THAT THE DC "COULD NOT BUT TAKE NOTE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S INITIATIVE, CONSIDERING IT POSITIVE IN

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THE CONTEXT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT."
(COMMENT: BESIDES UNDERLING THE POINT THAT THE

MEETING WAS ANDREOTTI'S AND NOT THE DC'S IDEA, GALLONI'S FORMULATION ALSO IMPLICITLY CRITICIZED ANDREOTTI'S EXTENSION OF THE DISCUSSION ON THE ACCORD'S IMPLEMENTATION TO AREAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE AGREEMENT--IE. THE US VISIT AND FOREIGN POLICY). IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS AS TO WHETHER ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT-PARTY MEETINGS WOULD BE HELD PERIODICALLY, GALLONI STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT NO FURTHER MEETING HAD BEEN SCHEDULED OR AGREED UPON, AND THAT THE WHOLE QUESTIONS OF PERIODIC MEETINGS WOULD HAVE TO BE EXAMINED FURTHER.

5. SOMEWHAT MORE CAUTIOUSLY, PSI SECRETARY CRAXI ECHOED GALONI'S RESERVED REACTION. CRAXI SAID THE MEETING PROVIDED A "VERY USEFUL CONVERSATION", THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION OF "GUARANTEES" AND THE METHOD OF INERPARTY CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN UP BY PARLIAMENT IN THE FALL. HE, IN FACT, FAVORED CONSULTATIONS IN PARLIAMENT. REACTIONS FROM THE OTHER LAY PARTIES WERE FAVORABLE ON THE WHOLE. ROMTA (PSDI) SAID THE MEETING WAS POSITIVE SINCE IT DEMONSTRATED THAT ALL THE PARTIES WERE ON AN "EQUAL FOOTING" IN WORKING OUT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCORD.

6. COMMENT: ANDREOTTI'S MOVE SHOWS LITTLE SIGN OF COORDINATION WITH THE MORO-ZACCAGNINI LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY, WHICH FOR BOTH POLICY AND INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS HAS CONSISTENTLY ATTEMPTED TO KEEP THE GOVERNMENT OUT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS ON THE INTERPARTY PROGRAM AGREEMENT. ON THE ONE HAND, THE

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DC HAS BEEN CONCERNED THAT IF THE GOVERNMENT'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERPARTY PROGRAM CONSULTATIONS WERE INSTITUTIONALIZED, IT WOULD TEND TO EXTEND THE ACCORD TO OTHER AREAS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM, THEREBY POSSIBLY ALTERING THE POLITICAL BALANCE AND ADVANCING THE PCI'S CLAIM TO PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY. ON AN INTERNAL POLITICAL LEVEL, MORO HAS ALSO WISHED TO EXCLUDE ANDREOTTI FROM THE DISCUSSIONS AS A MEANS OF CONSOLIDATING HIS POSITION AS THE DC'S PRIMARY LEADER WITH WHOM THE PCI IS OBLIGED TO DEAL WHENEVER IT WISHES TO COME TO ANY AGREEMENT WITH THE DC. TO BOTH MORO AND ANDREOTTI, THE ISSUE IS OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE IN THE LIGHT OF THE APPARENT AMBITIONS OF BOTH DC LEADERS TO SUCCEED LEONE TO THE ITALIAN PRESIDENCY AT THE END OF NEXT YEAR.

7. WHILE WE WILL BE SEEKING REACTIONS AND OPINIONS

ON ANDREOTTI'S INITIATIVE IN COMING DAYS,
AT THIS WRITING IT APPEARS THAT THE PRIME
MINISTER HAS ATTEMPTED TO FORCE MORO'S HAND AND
REASSERT HIS LEADERSHIP ROLE BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF
A UNIQUE COMBINATION OF TIMING. FRESH FROM THE
TRIUMPHS OF HIS US TRIP, ANDREOTTI COULD JUSTIFY
THE NEED (GIVEN PARLIAMENT'S RECESS) TO REPORT TO THE
PARTIES ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THAT IMPORTANT FOREIGN
AFFAIRS EVENT. SINCE THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WAS
SCHEDULED TO TAKE UP CERTAIN PUBLIC ORDER QUESTIONS
CONTAINED IN THE PROGRAM ACCORD ON THE FOLLOWING DAY,
IT COULD BE CONSIDERED ONLY NATURAL FOR THE GOVERNMENT
TO CONSULT THE VIEWS OF THE SIGNATORY PARTIES. FINALLY,
ANDREOTTI TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE BEGINNING OF THE
SUMMER PAUSE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY TO STRIKE WHEN
HIS OPPONENTS MAY HAVE BEEN OFF GUARD. IT SEEMS
LIKELY, HOWEVER, IN THE LIGHT OF GALLONI'S STATEMENTS,
THAT THE DC LEADERSHIP WILL TRY TO AVOID PERIODIC,
INSTITUTIONALIZED GOVERNMENT-PARTY MEETINGS ON
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCORD. THE PCI, ON THE OTHER
HAND, IS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED WITH ANDREOTTI'S MOVE, AN
ATTITUDE REINFORCED BY L'UNITA'S COVERAGE OF
THE AUGUST 2 MEETING WHICH OMITTS ANY MENTION OF
GALONI'S AND CRAXI'S RESERVATIONS.HOLMES

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